no 1871

(No 1)

INAUGURATION PASTORAL LETTER

OF

HIS GRACE ELZEAR-ALEXANDRE TASCHEREAU

ARCHBISHOP OF QUEBEC

19TH MARCH 1871.

ELZEAR-ALEXANDRE TASCHEREAU,

By the mercy of God and the favor of the Holy Apostolic See,
Archbishop of Quebec.

To the Clergy, Secular and Regular, to the Religious Communities and to all the Faithful of the Archdiocese of Quebec, Greeting and Benediction in Our Lord.

Obedience, Our Dearly Beloved Brethren, obedience to the voice of the Vicar of Jesus Christ makes it our duty to ascend this Archi-episcopal Throne of Quebec, rendered illustrious by the zeal, the prudence and the virtue of our predecessors. God knows that we have neither sought, nor desired, this formidable charge, the dangers and responsibility of which we comprehend, to-day more than ever. While meditating on the judgments of God, we have had occasion frequently hitherto to ask ourselves with Job: *Quid faciam cum surrexerit ad judicandum Deus, et cum quæsierit, quid respondebo illi?* What shall I do when God shall rise to judge? and when he shall examine, what shall I answer him? (Job XXXI. 14.)

Now that more numerous and more important duties are imposed upon us, the prospect of that judgment which must scrutinize all our acts, and weigh them in the balance of the sanctuary, fills us with fear, and helps us to forget the censures and praises of men.

One thought can alone console us, and remove our fears, at this moment ; it is that God is pleased to manifest his power by the weakest instruments, and to confound strength by what is most weak, that all glory may redound to His infinite Majesty, " and that no " flesh, as the great apostle expresses it, may glory in his sight." (I. Cor. I. 29). On the other hand, this God " who is rich in mercy " (Eph. II. 4.) has promised to grant the petitions of those who would pray to him. We expect, Our Dearly Beloved Brethren, that you shall obtain for us, by fervent supplications, the assistance which we feel we need so much. Your dearest and most sacred interests are at stake, because the blessings granted to the pastor redound upon the flock, and because the greatest misfortune, that can fall upon a diocese, is the drying up of the spring, from which flow thereon the wholesome waters of the evangelical word and of divine grace.

We shall not here repeat the praises of our illustrious predecessor, Monseigneur Charles-François Baillargeon, of saintly memory. Time, which destroys all, cannot efface from your memory the remembrance of his inexhaustible charity, of his ardent zeal, of his charming meekness. He receives to-day the reward of his fervent prayers, of his continual mortifications, of his self immolation, during his whole life as a priest and a bishop, to procure the glory of God by saving souls. We shall not speak of his death, edifying and precious in the sight of the Lord, which it was our lot to witness ; we shall not recall those funeral rites rendered still more magnificent by your regrets and by your tears than by the imposing ceremonies which accompanied them. All these things are engraven, in indelible characters, on your hearts, and " the just shall be in everlasting remembrance, *in memoria æterna erit justus.* (Ps. CXI. 17). God grant that we may walk in the footsteps of so beautiful a model, and that, inheritors of his zeal, we may sustain with care, and render more and more flourishing, the various diocesan works in which he took so lively an interest.

And you, Our Dear Cooperators in the government of souls, you whom the Lord has appointed together with us " the dispensers of his mysteries," we conjure you by God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, *testificor coram Deo et Jesu Christo qui judicaturus est vivos et mortuos* (II Tim. IV. 1.), persevere, during our episcopacy, in those traditions of faith and of zeal which have been

the strength of the Canadian Clergy and the consolation of our predecessors. Let us all have together " but one heart and one soul," that we may more efficaciously fulfil the sublime and formidable mission, which the Divine Pastor has intrusted to us in behalf of the souls redeemed by the blood of the immaculate Lamb. Let us often think on the terrible account which must render those who rule the people, *judicium durissimum his præsunt* (Wisdom VI. 6.) ; let us think still more on the everlasting crown promised by him who vouchsafes to be himself the exceeding great reward of his faithful servants, *ego ero merces tua magna nimis* (Gen. XV. 1.).

Spouses of Jesus Christ, virgins consecrated to the exercise of prayer and of charity, continue in the sight of God your holy mission ; you have forsaken all to follow Jesus Christ, he shall not suffer himself to be overcome in generosity, and he shall certainly reward the least of your sacrifices. From every one of your monasteries may the incense of your prayer penetrate the clouds, and rise to the throne of mercy, to call down upon us the most abundant blessings.

May the peace of Our Lord be with you all, faithful of this diocese, who greet us to-day as first pastor, *Pax vobis !* May the treasures of the divine goodness be opened in your behalf, and enrich you with all heavenly gifts ! May faith overflow your intelligence with its vivifying light ; may hope animate and console you in this vale of tears ; may charity fill your hearts with its sweet unction ! One consolation do we ask of God in this world, it is that you may be ever faithful to the inspirations of grace, ever the enemies of sin, that you may, in a word, ever wear that garment of justice and of holiness, with which Our Lord has invested you at holy baptism.

You shall forgive us, Our Dearly Beloved Brethren, if, after these general salutations, we add a special word concerning a house which is justly dear to us. Ever since its foundation, two centuries ago, the Seminary of Quebec has been for the canadian episcopacy an abundant nursery of zealous fellow-laborers ; at the epoch of the conquest, our worthy predecessors, ruined by the disasters of war, have found therein, during three quarters of a century, a generous hospitality. There we have received from devoted masters the blessings of classical

and theological education; there, received later with more charity than we deserved, we have spent the twenty-nine years of our priesthood. From that venerable house God has granted us to see rice, like a vigorous shoot from a majestic oak, the Laval University, that great and beautiful institution which, in a worthy manner, crowns our whole system of catholic superior education. If anything could soothe the pain which we feel in separating to-day from our late fellow-laborers of the Seminary and of the University, as well as from their numerous pupils, it is the thought that, if the bands, which united us together, are altered, at least, they are not broken.

The piety, the faith and the other virtues, which flourish in this diocese, sufficiently prove to us the wisdom of the rules of discipline established by our illustrious predecessors. Accordingly is it our intention not to change them at present, and to modify them later but as circumstances shall make it necessary.

Wherefore, having invoked the holy name of God, we renew and confirm, as much as may be necessary:

1st. All ordinances, regulations, rules of discipline, prohibitions and reserves in force, in the Archdiocese, at the moment of Archbishop Baillargeon's death;

2nd. In the same limits of time and of territory, the faculties given in writing, to confess, to preach, to commute vows, to dispense from certain impediments, which the archpriests and other priests of the diocese possessed at the same date; as to the faculties of the same kind given *viva voce* by Archbishop Baillargeon, or by the Administrators, and which were not given for a more limited time, they shall all cease on the first day of May next, unless they be specially renewed;

3rd. The faculties which possessed at the same date the priests authorised *viva voce*, or in writing, to hear the confessions of nuns.

We also ordain that the prayers *Pro papâ* and *Pro quâcumque necessitate*, as well as the litany after mass, be said as heretofore. The terrible trials of the Church, at this moment, and the misfortunse of

France, the country of our ancestors, impose upon all catholic hearts the duty to implore with fervor the clemency of the Most High, that He may vouchsafe to shorten these days of tribulation.

Such are, Our Dearly Beloved Brethren, the first dispositions by which we begin the exercise of the authority which Our Lord has intrusted to us, for his glory and for your spiritual welfare. Receive them as the first pledges of the love which we bear you, of the respect which we preserve for the memory of our illustrious predecessors, and of the desire by which we are animated of seeing peace and tranquillity, which spring from good order, ever prevail in your midst.

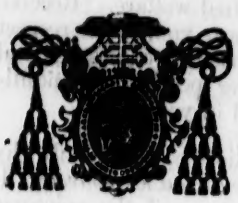
O immaculate Mary! patroness of this diocese, cast on all thy children looks of mercy, *illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.* It is in thy venerated sanctuary that we have received the episcopal unction; it is there we hope one day to rest after our labors; thou art our mother, obtain that we may be the faithful guardian of the large family, which thy Divine Son confides to our vigilance and to our solicitude.

O glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, who hast been established the lord and chief of God's household, guardian of his choicest treasures upon earth, spouse of the Immaculate Virgin, foster-father of Jesus, we shall, during our whole life, rejoice that thou hast permitted us to receive the episcopal unction on the day of thy feast, the first time that we celebrate it by saluting thee as the PATRON OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. Thou also, thou shalt be our consolation and our hope!

Under the auspices of Jesus, our Saviour, of Mary, our mother, of Joseph, Patron of this Country and of the Universel Church, we shall begin to-day, with less fear, to fulfil the formidable ministry which is laid upon us.

Shall this our present pastoral letter, excepting the Nos 2 and 3, be read, and published, at the prone of all parochial churches and chapels, and others, where public service is performed, and, in chapter, in all religious communities, on this very day, or on the first sunday after its reception.

Given, at Quebec, under our signature, and the countersign of our secretary, on the feast of St. Joseph, Patron of the Catholic Church, nineteenth March, one thousand eight hundred and seventy one.



✠ E.-A. ARCH. OF QUEBEC.

By order of His Grace,

C.-A. Collet, Eccl.,

Secretary.

of our
hurch,

C.

,

tary.

1871